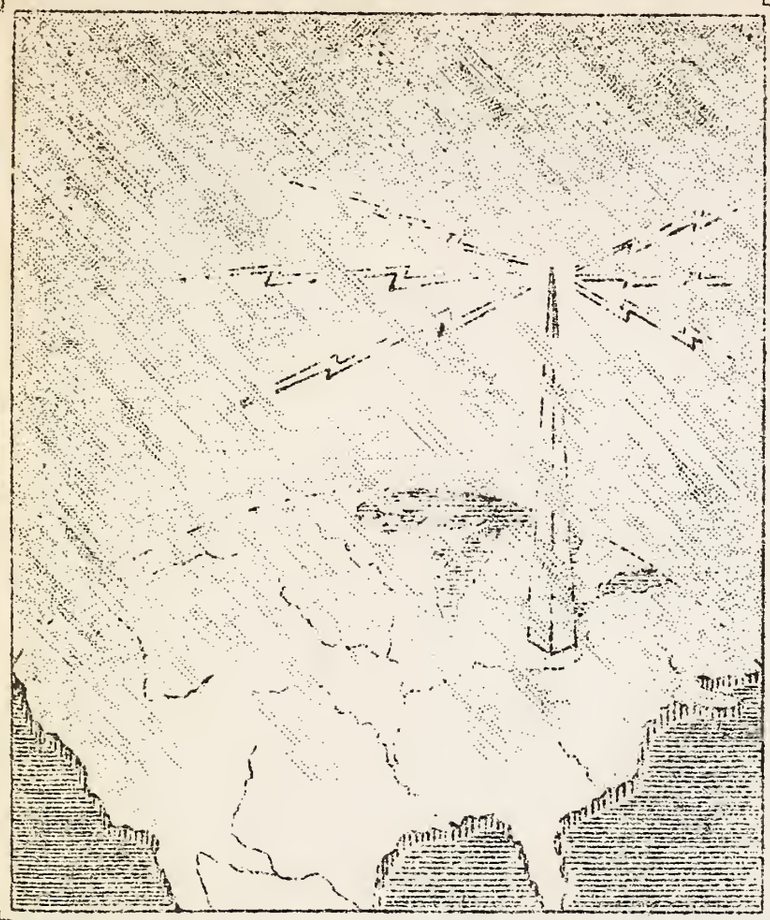
Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

F77
JUN 14 1940



FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

LIBRARY
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.

"OGLEBAY PARK"

Broadcast No. 7 in the third year
in a series of dramatizations
of better land use

WLW, Cincinnati

June 8, 1940 1:15-1:30 P.M.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
DAYTON, OHIO

SOUND: Thunder and rain...

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

Beautiful West Virginia is the home of the mountain laurel and the rhododendron, the home of the chestnut oak and the hickory and the maple. It is a land of hills, the Appalachian range in the east, the Allegheny plateau on the west. This is the story of a man who farmed those friendly hills, in a land of narrow canyons and billowy slopes drained by the Ohio, the Monongahela, the Kanawha. This is a story of a tomahawk claim that became a great farm, the story of a great farm that became a great park, a story of a great man from the West Virginia hills--Earl W. Oglebay.

ORGAN: THE WEST VIRGINIA HILLS, fading...

ANNOUNCER

In 1901, Earl Oglebay was a bank president, an important figure in the iron ore industry. But he was also a very sick man.

SOUND: Door opens and closes, gently...

OGLEBAY (faintly)

That you, Sallie?

SALLIE

Yes, dear.

OGLEBAY

Where's...Oh, I didn't even hear the doctor leave.

SALLIE

He just went out. Can I get you something?

OGLEBAY (with a little more vigor)

You can get me out of this darn bed! I'm sick and tired of it. What did the doctor say, anyhow?

SALLIE

Do you want to know the truth?

OGLEBAY

I asked you, didn't I?

SALLIE

Earl...you've got to quit work.

OGLEBAY

Quit work? Why, for heaven's sake! There's so much to be done, and I...well, what would you have me do...spend the rest of my life sitting on the front porch looking out at the beautiful world marching by?

SALLIE

We may as well face facts, dear. We've been married twenty years. We won't have much life left together...unless you get some rest. Maybe go out on a farm...

OGLEBAY

Me go out on a farm? Why, I...you know, Sallie, maybe that's not such a bad idea after all.

SALLIE

There's the Waddington Farm...my family owns it, and you could...

OGLEBAY (showing much interest)

Look, Sallie...do you suppose they'd be willing to sell it?

SALLIE

Here, Earl! Lie back down there! You're supposed to be resting.

OGLEBAY

I know, but...would they sell the farm?

SALLIE

Why, I imagine they would. It's changed hands more than once since Zachariah Sprigg staked out his claim with a tomahawk a hundred years ago.

OGLEBAY

This idea intrigues me, the more I think about it. Earl Oglebay, farmer. No...Earl Oglebay, model farmer.

ORGAN: THOSE SINGING HILLS, fading out...

SOUND: Hammer striking metal several times.

OGLEBAY

Now! Hand me that wrench, Milton.

MILTON

Listen, Mr. Oglebay. Let me fix that harrow.

OGLEBAY (good naturedly)

Get out of the way! You're my farm manager, Milton Hine, but that doesn't mean you do all the work. By George, I'm getting to be the best mechanic in Ohio County.

MILTON

I'm beinning to believe you really are.

OGLEBAY

And besides, we're lucky to own such things as plows. Why, when the Chaplines and the Smiths and the Paxtons farmed here, they didn't have such modern equipment. I've read about those early settlers...some of them even harrowed their wheat seed in by dragging brush over the ground--sometimes with their own hands if they were short of horses.

MILTON

Those pioneer days must have been tough. I heard about one fellow... named Avery...Alfred Avery I think it was. Anyhow, according to this story, he lived up in New England.

OGLEBAY

That's where a lot of the settlers around here came from.

MILTON

Anyhow, one time he went out with his father to plant corn. He was just a little shaver, but he brought his hoe, chopping and sweating to do what he could. Well, all of a sudden his father noticed he was crying. What's the matter, son, he says. And the kid told his father, I can't get enough dirt to cover the corn. And Mr. Oglebay, that was a turning point in that family's life. The father suddenly realized that maybe they'd better head out for land where the soil was deeper. They went to Ohio, so the story goes.

OGLEBAY

Yes, that's the way they came. My grandfather came here from Connecticut in a covered wagon. This is historic land, Milton. George Washington surveyed much of it. And there was a fellow named Christopher Gist who explored the land along the Ohio around 1751.

MILTON

So Washington and this guy Gist helped lay out this very farm.

OGLEBAY

Probably. Here, now give me that can of axle grease.

MILTON

Here it is.

OGLEBAY

Yes, Milton, those were historic days. Agriculture in West Virginia was backward for a long time after the land was settled. Pioneer conditions, such as lighting with tallow candles, and eating wild turkey, and sleeping on pigeon feather beds, lasted up in the hills. The settlers had nothing but patch crops, and most farmers passed on by for the more level lands of the west.

MILTON

But even so, the country hadn't been manhandled then. It hadn't been gullied like this farm is.

OGLEBAY (pausing, then with deliberation)

Say that again.

MILTON

I mean that this land has been manhandled.

OGLEBAY

Milton Hine, you may not know it, but that's one of the smartest things you ever said. This land has been manhandled. It wasn't washed to the devil when Zachariah Sprigg marked his tomahawk claim. But the settlers had to fight the hills. You see, there's a definite connection between the physical features of a land and the temperament of its people. This West Virginia land is tough, Milt. It takes a fighter to make a living out of the hills. We're fighters, aren't we, Milton?

MILTON

I'm with you all the way, Mr. Oglebay. I just wish you'd let me do more of the work.

OGLEBAY

You'll have plenty to do. Now, look: we've been going at it the wrong way. These hills were never made for corn. We've been growing corn to feed the horses to plow the fields to grow the corn. Get me?

MILTON

Yes, but...

OGLEBAY

We're not treating the land right. Let's handle it like it ought to be. It's too steep for corn, but grass..why, Milton, this is pasture land!

MILTON

Sure, I knew that all along. I've seen some of the other farms, and...

OGLEBAY

Then why didn't you say so? Let's go in for livestock farming! Get some Guernsey cattle, and try to build up better strains. Hackney and Suffolk horses, poultry, sheep...but let's make this a laboratory for experimentation in good agriculture. And, let's make the results public property. After I'm gone, people will forget Earl Oglebay, the banker, the iron ore guy.

MILTON

Oh, no...

OGLEBAY

They'll forget Oglebay, the farmer...but if I can leave one bit of information behind that will help West Virginia farmers, Oglebay, the farmer, will rest in peace.

ORGAN: THE WEST VIRGINIA HILLS, fading behind...

ANNOUNCER

Thus was established a million-dollar laboratory for experiments in agricultural practices, experiments of which the results were public property. Waddington Farm, so-called by a previous owner in memory of his English home, was talked of wherever men talked of scientific farming and the breeding of fine livestock. In the cradle of strip cropping, where men learned to control erosion on steep hills, Waddington Farm developed.

ORGAN: FUNERAL DIRGE, fading completely out.

ANNOUNCER

Earl Oglebay's fame spread. Waddington Farm became a model farm. But the man of whom one biographer wrote, "the history of the iron and steel business included the history of Earl Oglebay's life"... began to tire. In 1910 he sent for his nephew, Crispin Oglebay.

OGLEBAY

I'm so glad you're here, Crispin.

CRISPIN

I came at once, Uncle Earl. What's all the bother?

OGLEBAY

Oh, I've been doing a lot of thinking. I want you to handle matters from now on.

CRISPIN

You mean, the farm?

OGLEBAY

Not yet. I have definite plans for the farm. But I've been lost since Sallie...went away.

CRISPIN (softly)

I understand, Uncle. She would have been happy to know how you've fared. I can see her smile, still, the time the Panama-Pacific Exposition committee named you "the most useful citizen of West Virginia."

OGLEBAY

She was a wonderful woman, Crispin.

CRISPIN

Indeed she was. She would be happy to know that you've been Food Administrator for the state during the war, trustee of Bethany College, Western Reserve University, member of the governing board of West Virginia University, and...

OGLEBAY

Enough of that! I didn't ask you to come to tell me what a great man I am. But, Sallie...I think most of all she would have liked for me to be known as a good farmer.

CRISPIN

She has told me that.

OGLEBAY

I am old, Crispin. Nearly seventy. I've made out my will, and have made you the executor.

CRISPIN

I'll be glad to...but Uncle Earl, this is all so silly! Why, you'll be able to run things for a long time yet.

ORGAN: AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL.

OGLEBAY

Nevertheless, there's one item I want you to remember. Waddington Farm is a good farm. It was nearly ruined by soil erosion. It must never be allowed to fall into careless hands. I have tried to operate it in the public benefit. Now, my will is, Waddington Farm shall become the property of the City of Wheeling, "for the people to operate for purposes of public recreation and education." Crispin, take good care of that land. America needs our land.

ORGAN: Up and Out.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of the Waddington Farm, now known as Oglebay Park, of Wheeling, West Virginia. And now, once again we turn to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is Ewing Jones.

JONES

Thanks, _____. I wonder if I could do a bit of newscasting on the Peter Grant style?

ANNOUNCER

Pete's going to lose his job if you do it too accurately, Ewing, but I'll ask Bill Campbell to turn on the ticker...

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking...

JONES

Oglebay Park has good pastures, and for farmers who would like to improve their own pastures, may I suggest a double feature: a new bulletin by R. H. Morrish, called "Profitable Pastures", and the illustrated bulletin by Kenneth Welton, "Saving Soil With Sod." Your cue, _____.

ANNOUNCER

If you would like copies of these two bulletins, send a penny postcard to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio, and ask for the pasture bulletins.

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking...

JONES

Oglebay Park has good woodlands, and this is to announce that the Soil Conservation Service has started two new farm forestry projects. They're in Geauga County, Ohio, with headquarters at Burton, and Robertson County, Tennessee, with headquarters at Springfield. Nearby counties are included.

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking...

JONES

Here's word from O. E. Fink, Director of the Conservation Laboratory. The State Department of Education, Division of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Ohio State University are sponsoring a teaching training program this summer at the Ross-Hocking State Forest, a school in the forest. It starts June 13, ends July 18. I can't give you all the details, but if you are interested in attending this teacher-training program, write O. E. Fink, State Office Building, Columbus, Ohio.

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking...

JONES

Oglebay Park also has an Executive Secretary, Frank P. Sanders. Frank has done an admirable job of coordinating all of the facilities of the park, that include...well, what do they include, Frank?

SANDERS

You'd better get your shorthand notebook, Ewing, because they include...

JONES

The lightning notebook is ready.

SANDERS

Camping, with outdoor ovens; music in the modern or the classical manner, on the outdoor stage; arts and crafts; dramatic plays. Then there's golfing, tennis, swimming, equitation (or horseback riding as you call it); bird hunts...

JONES

Just hold up, Frank. I'm about to leave you and head for Oglebay Park. This isn't all the result of one man who determined to save his farm for his fellow man.

SANDERS

It started out that way. Crispin Oglebay decided to establish a demonstration program along the lines his uncle had in mind when he made his will. He asked help from the Agricultural Extension Service of West Virginia University. The result was an extension division staff of specialists, and that was the nucleus of a program of public recreation and adult education that, with a few additions, is the program of what is now Oglebay Institute...which is the official sponsor of the activities of Oglebay Park.

JONES

Frank, you talk about activities at Oglebay Park.

SANDERS

I talk about them because they're one of the best inspirations I've ever known. I've seen these kids come in from the city, dirty behind the ears a lot of times...sometimes without much more than a bowl of breakfast food under their belts..but they come up there, and get out into the open, swing on the trees, listen to the music...and I know that Earl Oglebay can look down on them and say, my farm saved my life: it's building other lives now.

JONES

I quite agree with you. And Frank, it's remarkable to think that one man is responsible for all this.

SANDERS

Not one man, Ewing. Earl W. Oglebay was responsible for the City of Wheeling to have such a wonderful recreational center... and a model farm as well. Crispin Oglebay and all of the other heirs have been so intensely interested in building up this place, that, in all sincerity, it is a model for other farmers to follow. Not many of them have the money that Mr. Oglebay had, but they have the same type of land, hills and hills and hills, and little by little they can build up the soil or at least bind it down and put it to its best use.

JONES

But you say "no one man". Frank, whom is responsible? You?

SANDERS

I do not choose to run. We've been talking about Wheeling's Park, but as a matter of fact it's a community affair. It's towns like Moundsville and Wellsburg, West Virginia, and Bellaire and Steubenville, Ohio...community cooperation, that make the activities a success. And it isn't just a park...it's a mutual meeting ground for the folks of Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and anybody else that wants to come to see us--to get together, listen to music, learn about soil conservation, learn about trees, learn about folk lore.

JONES

...and learn about each other.

SANDERS

...and we're doing that. There's W. P. Wilson, chairman of the Wheeling Park Commission; Dr. Ira Fawcett, President of Oglebay Institute, and B. A. Burt, Sr., former president; Homer Fish, Park Superintendent...oh, well, Ewing, there's a lot of names but they are names that mean a lot to the history of Waddington Farm, in the hills of West Virginia, where Zachariah Sprigg placed blaze marks on boundary trees, to make his tomahawk claim.

JONES

All I can say, Frank, is that the friendly hills of West Virginia need never be ashamed of historic Waddington Farm, now known as Oglebay Park, looking down on Wheeling, West Virginia. Our thanks to Frank Sanders for his visit with us today. This is Ewing Jones, speaking for the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, inviting you to be with us next week.

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

Remember, if you want copies of the two illustrated bulletins on pastures and meadows, write to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio, and say, "send me the two bulletins." Next week, Berea College.